

PREPARING FOR YOUR JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY AND RETURN HOME

Preparing for Your Surgery

Once you and your orthopaedic surgeon decide that joint replacement surgery is the best option to relieve your pain and restore motion, you'll begin preparing for your surgery.

Fitness for Surgery

Every surgery involves some risk and potential complications. Your surgeon will explain these to you and will discuss measures you can take to help reduce these risks.

Your surgeon also might ask you to see your primary care physician to make sure you don't have any health conditions that could complicate your surgery.

Review Your Medications With Your Surgeon

It's important that you tell your surgeon and other healthcare providers about any medications you're currently taking. You may need to stop taking certain medications – as well as certain over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and supplements – before your surgery.

Strength and Flexibility Exercises

Your surgeon also may prescribe certain exercises for you to begin before your surgery to increase your muscle strength and flexibility. Strengthening your muscles before surgery can assist in your recovery.

Blood Donation

Your doctor may recommend that you donate blood before your surgery. Known as an "autologous blood donation," this type of blood donation would allow you to receive your own blood if you need

a transfusion due to your surgery. There are several options regarding blood donation and surgery, and your doctor will explain these to you.

Anesthesia

You will need anesthesia for your surgery. Depending on your health history, the medications you take, and the results of your physical examination, you may have options regarding your anesthesia. Your doctor will discuss these with you.

Ask Any Other Questions You May Have

It's normal to have questions about your surgery. Some questions you may wish to ask your doctor include:

- How much time does this procedure generally take?
- How long can I expect to be in the hospital?
- When can I expect to resume my normal activities?
- How much relief from pain and increased mobility should I expect?
- Which implant did you select for my joint replacement?
- Why do you believe this is the best implant for my condition?

Preparing Now for Your Return Home

Because you will be limited in your activity for a time after your procedure, it's important that you prepare in advance for your return home.

Here are some things you can do now to make your recovery easier:

- Finish all of your laundry before surgery.

- Set aside loose, comfortable clothing to wear during your recovery time.
- Prepare meals before your surgery and freeze them. This will mean less meal-preparation time and clean-up after your surgery.
- Remove throw rugs or other tripping hazards – such as electrical cords and magazine racks – from walking paths to avoid accidents or falls. If necessary, widen the paths around your furniture to accommodate a walker or cane.
- Place regularly used items – such as remote controls, medications, and reading materials – in easy-to-reach locations.
- Un-tuck bedding to make getting into and out of bed easier.
- If your bedroom is on another level, you may want to relocate your sleeping arrangements temporarily to the first floor. This will allow you to avoid climbing stairs when you aren't feeling your best.
- Having some assistance at home after a total joint replacement also can be very helpful. Contact family members or friends before your surgery to give them an opportunity to make arrangements to help you after your procedure.

After Your Surgery

After your joint replacement, your surgeon will prescribe a specific recovery plan for you. You will need to follow this plan carefully. Don't attempt any exercises that your surgeon hasn't prescribed for you. Also, don't alter your prescribed recovery schedule. It will take time for your joint to heal properly.

If you have any questions about your joint replacement, before or after your procedure, please call your surgeon.